

## CORAL CONSERVATION: Preventing/Responding to Injury Events

### We are Stewards of the Ocean.

*We will enforce and comply with marine protected species regulations, work with other agencies and organizations to develop appropriate regulations for marine protected species recovery, and publicize our efforts to gain the support and resources necessary to fully implement the U. S. Coast Guard's Strategic Plan, Ocean Steward.*

Coral reef habitats are among the most diverse and valuable of the world's ecosystems. They are sources of tremendous biological and economic wealth, providing shoreline protection, critical habitat for living marine resources, opportunities for recreation and tourism, pharmaceuticals and jobs.

The U.S. Coast Guard is involved in coral conservation through servicing aids to navigation, regulating anchorages, enforcing fisheries law, responding to spills, and preventing spills. We are also involved because we maintain and operate vessels and facilities, which have the potential to inadvertently harm coral reefs. In addition, conservation of coral reef ecosystems is consistent with the Coast Guard's Ocean Steward initiative to help the nation recover and maintain endangered and protected marine species.

As the principal federal maritime law enforcement agency and a leader in the effort to protect the nation's marine environment, Coast Guard involvement is essential to the conservation of our coral reef ecosystems. The Commandant requires the agency to ensure compliance with Executive Order 13089 and the National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs.

Some specific activities include enforcement, minimizing and responding to coral reef damage, and marine debris removal.



THE U.S. COAST GUARD IS A MILITARY, MULTI-MISSION, MARITIME SERVICE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY. ITS CORE ROLES ARE TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND U.S. ECONOMIC AND SECURITY INTERESTS.



# CORAL CONSERVATION

The U.S. Coast Guard is an active participant on the U.S. Coral Reef Task Forces' Responding to Injury Events Working Group. Participants include federal and state partners who work to:

- Facilitate the development of a coral reef toolbox that gathers lessons learned,
- Develop proposals to sponsor injury workshops,
- Assess gaps in authority and capacity to respond to injury events, and proposals for how to address these gaps.
- Work with USEPA, USFWS, NMFS, ACOE and jurisdictions to develop lists of potential mitigation sites in coordination with interagency coral reef mitigation working groups, and
- Continue efforts with FEMA and the Stafford Act authority to clarify how to address coral reef injury events associated with storms and other natural disasters.



CREDIT: USCG

The U.S. Coast Guard's marine environmental protection outreach & education program, Sea Partners, reaches an audience of over 300,000 people. In addition to coral reef protection, the Sea Partners program addresses other environmental issues such as endangered species protection, oil spill prevention, beach clean-ups, and illegal garbage dumping. The outreach and education program helps in part to prevent coral injuries.

In addition to interagency policy development and educational efforts, the U.S. Coast Guard is active in a response capacity.

In 2005 the U.S. Coast Guard expended an estimated 1574 resource hours responding to, mitigating, and eliminating marine oil and other pollutants in coral reef areas or areas that impact coral reefs.

In 2007, we reported to the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force that we prevented over 145,000 gallons of oil/fuel from spilling into the marine environment within the Pacific Island region. Three significant cases included preventing:

- 34,000 gallons of oil/fuel from spilling off the F/V WAHINE KAPOLOA into the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands National Marine Monument.
- 110, 000 gallons of oil/fuel from spilling off the M/V TONG CHENG 130 NM west of Oahu.
- 400 gallons of oil/fuel from spilling off the F/V WAHINE KAPOLOA southeast of Ni’ihau.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE USCG'S EFFORTS TO PROTECT CORAL, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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**THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD IS A  
PROUD PARTICIPANT IN THE IYOR 2008**

